



FOR PROFESSIONALS
SINCE 1941

INTERNSHIPS ARE THE GATEWAY TO JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

25 June 2015: Thousands of students graduate annually from tertiary institutions, making entry into the workforce a competitive battle. Internships can provide a real advantage in the search for employment, making it advisable for students to identify internships during their holidays to ensure they can get a foot in the door for future employment opportunities.

This is according to Rama Govenden, Executive: HR at PPS, who says that students must never underestimate the value of mentorship and internship programmes. “These types of teaching programmes allow students to gain relevant experience and guidance in their chosen field of study. Whether it is holiday work, a part-time job, an experiential learning year, campus jobs or volunteer work does not change the great benefits of the experience.”

Govenden explains that employers will see this experience as proof that the candidate made an extra effort to equip themselves with the necessary skills to enter the job market while studying. “Although any type of working experience will be valuable to the student’s career, it is most beneficial to obtain experience in the chosen field of study as the student will be able to combine their theoretical knowledge with practical experience gained while studying. As a result, they will appeal to companies as valuable candidate for vacancies.”

Work experience can empower the student with a positive work ethic and a sense of professional organisational conduct, which is of immense value when it comes to finding permanent employment, he says. “Internships are also a great opportunity for students to try and secure employment directly after graduation. When interns prove their talent, skill and determination during their internship programme, they may be offered a permanent contract once the internship contract expires. This is one of the best ways for organisations to find entry-level employees.”

Govenden says internship programmes also give students the opportunity to network and meet influential players within their chosen sector. “By acquainting themselves with the prominent figures and connecting with them at work and on professional networks such as LinkedIn and Google+, graduates can follow these influencers for potential employment opportunities or as mentors for personal growth.

Another benefit of partaking in an internship is that the student will have a better understanding of what the occupation entails in real-life terms. “When young matriculants decide on a career path, they might not be aware of the more technical requirements that go with the day-to-day activities of their chosen career. Some careers require extensive overtime work, working during weekends and holidays or even working in industrial locations away from the cities. Other jobs might involve spending a whole day in front of a computer, while in certain professions the employee is out in the field during their daily tasks.”

Internships offer numerous benefits to students, graduates and part-time students alike as it can serve as the foundation for their future career path. “PPS will soon be advertising openings for its 2016 Graduate Programme and all students who meet the criteria should consider applying to be part of this opportunity. Graduates are also encouraged to register on the PPS Professionals Connect career portal (www.professionalsconnect.co.za), which provides graduates with career advice as well as support in connecting them with employment opportunities within PPS and various other companies,” concludes Govenden.